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The situation in Central America: progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

Letter dated 18 September 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to address you concerning the provisional agenda of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly and, specifically, agenda item 20 on "the situation in Central America: progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development". As you know, this item remains on the agenda of the Assembly for consideration upon notification by a Member State, in accordance with General Assembly decision 60/508 of 31 October 2005.

Thanks to the progress in consolidating Central America as a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development, no Government has hitherto requested consideration of this item. Furthermore, it has been our policy not to do so, firstly out of concern to streamline the agenda of the General Assembly, and secondly, because, in practice, no reason for such a request had arisen.

On this occasion, we wish to bring to the attention of the General Assembly a very specific matter that, in our view, remains pending. In its resolution 58/239, adopted on 23 December 2003, the General Assembly "[t]akes note with satisfaction of the intention of the Government of Guatemala to establish a Commission for the Investigation of Illegal Groups and Clandestine Security Apparatuses, and urges the Secretary-General to support that initiative with a view to its prompt implementation". Almost four years passed before this initiative was carried out, and in the most recent report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the situation in Central America, dated 11 August 2005 (A/60/218), it was stated in paragraph 32 that the initiative had not been carried out because it had failed to achieve parliamentary ratification in Guatemala but that "... the Government announced that it would promote a new agreement to address impunity".

In September 2007, after lengthy negotiations, the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) was established by the Government of Guatemala, in association with the United Nations and with the full support of the Guatemalan Congress.

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In that respect, my Government considers it timely to inform the General Assembly of the commitments met and achievements made in this matter, not only in order to implement resolution 58/239 but because we believe that this initiative is of general interest to United Nations Member States.

I therefore respectfully request that you take this note as the notification referred to in decision 60/508 so that the CICIG can be considered in plenary at the sixty-third session, based on a report by the Secretary-General under agenda item 20. I also request that you have this letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Gert **Rosenthal**
Permanent Representative